

Appl. No. 10/634,881

Reply to Office Action of: December 12, 2006

REMARKS

Applicant wishes to thank the Examiner for reviewing the present application.

Claim Amendments

Independent claims 1, 9, 12, 16, 19 and 20 have been amended for clarity and to improve readability and grammar. Applicant believes that the nature of these amendments would not necessitate a further search as it is believed that no additional limitations have been added only clarification of those limitations in the claims as previously presented.

Dependent claims 2-8, 10-11, 13-15, and 17-18 have been amended for consistency with the amended parent claims.

No new subject matter is believed to have been added by way of these amendments.

Claim Rejections – 35 U.S.C. 112

Claims 1-8, 12-15 and 19 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph as being indefinite for allegedly being incomplete. Although Applicant does not necessarily agree with the Examiner that the claims do not include steps, Applicant believes that the amendments made to the claims as outlined above overcome the Examiner's rejections. In particular, the revised grammatical structure of the independent claims is believed to clarify each step in the respective methods.

Accordingly, Applicant believes that claims 1-8, 12-15 and 19 comply with 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph.

Claim Rejections – 35 U.S.C. 102

Claims 1-2 and 7-15 have been rejected under U.S.C. 102(a) as being anticipated by Venkatraman (IEEE vol. 3, Sept. 28, 2000; pages 1268-1273). Applicant respectfully traverses the rejections as follows.

Claim 1 comprises attempting to establish a MANET at periodic predetermined times. If the MANET can be established and one of the devices is capable of obtaining certificates, then a certificate is distributed through the MANET to one or more devices. In this way, all devices are encouraged to try to connect at the same time to facilitate distribution to those devices in the MANET.

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Venkatraman does not teach these steps. The Examiner points to page 1269, first column, second paragraph. However, in this paragraph, Venkatraman discusses time stamping a certificate and synchronizing the clocks of the nodes to be able to consistently judge whether or not a certificate has expired. There is no mention of periodically attempting to establish a MANET at predetermined times as recited in claim 1. In fact, Venkatraman only discusses a MANET in column 2, paragraph 1 of page 1269. In this paragraph, Venkatraman merely discusses MANET authentication.

The Examiner also cites page 1271, second column, first paragraph as teaching what is recited in claim 1. However, in this passage, Venkatraman discusses authentication tags for a cluster of devices, but is silent as to attempting to establish a MANET at periodic predetermined times.

As such, Applicant believes that Venkatraman does not teach every element of claim 1 and thus cannot anticipate. Claims 2 and 7-8 being dependent on claim 1 are also believed to distinguish over Venkatraman for at least that reason.

Claim 9 recites a method of distributing certificates in a MANET having an access point. The method comprises retrieving certificates for the mobile devices in the MANET and storing those at the access point. When the MANET is established, the certificates can then be forwarded to the mobile devices. In this way, if a device does not have to be in the range of the access point at the time the certificate is issued, since the access point stores the certificate and, when they are able to join the MANET, it would be available to them through the access point (see page 16, lines 27-33).

The Examiner points to page 1271, first column, third paragraph and Figure 1 in Venkatraman as teaching what is recited in claim 9. However, this passage actually refers to a session key establishment between two nodes (A and B) in different network clusters through their respective cluster heads (CH1 and CH3). This is not equivalent to having an access point to the network store certificates for subsequent distribution through a MANET. Venkatraman is silent as to such an arrangement. Although CH1 and CH3 are said to act as CAs for each cluster, there is no mention of obtaining certificates and storing them on behalf of devices in a MANET. This passage in Venkatraman is specific to a cluster arrangement and not for distribution of certificates in a MANET. For at least this reason, Applicant believes that Venkatraman fails to teach every element of claim 9 and thus cannot anticipate. Applicant further believes that the

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grammatical revisions to claim 9 clarify these distinctions. Claims 10-11 being dependent on claim 9 are also believed to distinguish over Venkatraman.

Claim 12 is directed to a method of distributing certificates in a MANET which comprises having an online entity be responsible for both distributing a certificate to a particular one of the devices in the MANET and for obtaining other certificates for that device to validate other devices in the MANET.

The Examiner again cites the above-noted passage on page 1271 in Venkatraman as teaching what is recited in claim 12. However, as discussed above, this passage discusses establishing a session key between entities in different network clusters. There is no mention of having the same online entity be responsible for distributing a certificate to a device and obtain other certificates for the purpose of validating other devices in the MANET. Venkatraman is entirely silent in that regard. For at least this reason, Applicant believes that Venkatraman fails to teach each and every element in claim 12 and thus cannot anticipate. Claims 13-15 being dependent on claim 12 are believed to also distinguish over Venkatraman for at least that reason.

Claim Rejections – 35 U.S.C. 103

Claims 3 and 5-6 have been rejected under U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Venkatraman in view of Zhou (IEEE November/December 1999). Applicant respectfully traverses the rejections as follows.

Claims 3 and 5-6 are dependent on claim 1, which Applicant is believed to have shown distinguishes over Venkatraman. As such, Zhou must at least teach what is missing from Venkatraman. However, Zhou clearly does not teach attempting to establish a MANET at periodic predetermined times. Therefore, Applicant believes that Zhou fails to teach what is missing from Venkatraman and, for at least that reason, claims 3 and 5-6 are believed to be patentably distinguished over Venkatraman in view of Zhou.

Claim 4 has been rejected under U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Venkatraman in view of Lemilainen (US 6,766,160). Applicant respectfully traverses the rejections as follows.

Claim 4 is dependent on claim 1, which Applicant is believed to have shown distinguishes over Venkatraman. As such, Lemilainen must at least teach what is missing from Venkatraman. However, Lemilainen clearly does not teach attempting to establish a MANET at periodic predetermined times. Therefore, Applicant believes that Lemilainen fails to teach what

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is missing from Venkatraman and, for at least that reason, claim 4 is believed to be patentably distinguished over Venkatraman in view of Lemilainen.

Claims 16-20 have been rejected under U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Venkatraman. Applicant respectfully traverses the rejections as follows.

Claim 16 is directed to a method of securely setting a time source in a first mobile device which is capable of communicating with a second mobile device. A shared secret is established with the second device using certificates., the shared secret is then stored in non-volatile memory, the second device is authenticated using the shared secret and the time obtained from the second device to enable the time source to be set.

Claim 19 is directed to a method of a first mobile device validating a second mobile device by determining if a certificate obtained by the first device has expired. If the certificate has not expired, the certificate is used to validate the second device and, if the certificate is not valid, the first mobile device obtains another certificate using a pointer provided by the second device and validates the second device using the another certificate.

Claim 20 is directed to a method of distributing certificates when a first mobile device is unable to retrieve a certificate at a certain time due to a lack of connectivity. If the certificate has not been obtained by a second time, the first mobile device then requests the assistance of other devices. A second device that has connectivity may then request the certificate on behalf of the first device.

The Examiner relies on an apparent admission that the two inventions share similar language as the basis for rejecting claims 16-20. Applicant believes that the Examiner has misinterpreted Applicant's comments in this regard. Although the claims share similar language, they are not the same such that separate consideration would not be warranted. As outlined above, claims 16-20 are directed to different aspects than claims 1-15. As such it is believed that they should be examined individually. Nevertheless, Applicant believes that the amendments made to claims 16-20 clarify the nature of what is claimed.

Regarding claim 16, Venkatraman does not teach or suggest setting a time source using a shared secret. Regarding claim 19, Venkatraman does not teach or suggest obtaining another certificate using a pointer provided to the first mobile device. Regarding claim 20, Venkatraman does not teach or suggest having a second device to request a certificate on behalf of a first device. For at least these reasons, claims 16-20 are believed to be patentably distinguished over

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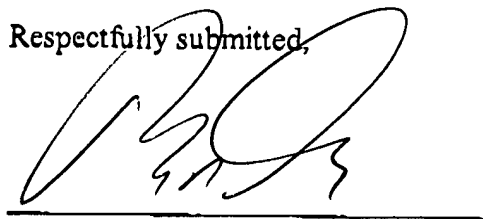
Venkatraman.

Summary

In view of the foregoing, Applicant respectfully submits that claims 1-20 clearly and patentably distinguish over the references cited by the Examiner and, as such, are in condition for allowance.

Applicant requests early reconsideration and allowance of the present application.

Respectfully submitted,



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